

KECK-47

SADIE CARILLI

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INTERVIEWER: DANA GUMB

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AGE 9

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GUMB: This is Dana Gumb and I'm speaking with Mrs. Sadie Carilli on the 11th day of October, 1985. We're beginning this interview at 10:45. We're about to interview Mrs. Carilli about her immigration experience from Italy in the year 1904. Okay, Mrs. Carilli, if we could begin with where and when were you born?

CARILLI: 1885, 1885, I beg your pardon. July the 15th. 1885, uh, ninety-five. Oh, I . . .

GUMB: 1895.

CARILLI: 1895.

GUMB: Okay. And, uh, where were you born?

CARILLI: In Italy.

GUMB: Where in Italy?

CARILLI: Southern Italy.

GUMB: Okay. What was the name of the town?

CARILLI: Oh, maybe you can't spell it, but the name of the town was  
Sobratto [ph].

GUMB: Okay. Could you spell it for us?

CARILLI: Uh . . .

GUMB: Okay. All right. That's fine. Okay.

CARILLI: Sobratto. [ph]

GUMB: Okay. All right. What was life like in Sobratto [ph]?

CARILLI: Well, life over there, as I remember, was very pleasant because  
we lived right across the ocean and has now been a summer resort  
and that's what it was then. But, of course, now it's much, much  
better.

GUMB: Okay. Were you living in a town, or a city?

CARILLI: No, we were living, no, it was a town, because it was, in fact,

it was a small town, maybe about two thousand people, because most of the men were all fishermen. And,uh, my father was one of them. And if you want to know about the life, we were thirteen children, twelve girls and one boy, and my father and mother, of course, .

GUMB: Yeah. What kind of house did you live in?

CARILLI: A house? Well, the house was a long one, with two stairs on each side, and it was two floors. And the, uh, we lived on top, the second floor, I would say, and we had a very good flat.

GUMB: Did you go to school there?

CARILLI: Well, I only went there one year, because then we came here to America.

GUMB: Okay. Uh, okay. Uh, how did, uh, your family decide to come here?

CARILLI: Well, if you want to know that it's a, well, I would say a short history or a long history. Since my father was a fisherman, he adopted a boy, I'm sure of that. And my sisters, of course, had to go to work, and that's one thing he didn't want to. So he and two of my sisters, the oldest, came here in America 1902. In 1903, two other sisters of mine and my brother came here. Then he sent for the rest of the family, and we were seven children and my mother, and the adopted fellow.

GUMB: Okay. He adopted a son?

CARILLI: Yes, he did. Because we only had, see, my brother was after me and he was a young boy. And since my father had, uh, fishing boats, well, then he wanted another boy, if you would say, so he thought he'd adopt this orphan. And he came here with us.

GUMB: I see. Okay, uh, all right, so, um, Mrs. Carilli, we were talking about your father adopted an orphan.

CARILLI: A young man, yes.

GUMB: Right. And, uh, because he needed him to work . . .

CARILLI: Well, he needed somebody with him to go to work with. So since he was an orphan, my father thought he'd adopt him.

GUMB: Uh, but, I didn't get why, uh, why did your family think to come to America?

CARILLI: Well, I told you why. Because, as I say, my father didn't want my sisters to go to work. Work over there wasn't like over here, factories. So, work over there was going out working in the farm or loading or unloading the ships that used to come here. As I said, we lived right near the ocean, and there used to be ships coming there, and they used to have lumbar, they used to have oranges, and they used to have lemons and, of course, chestnuts

from the mountains, from other towns, and that's how my father thought would be best to come here, because he had two brothers here in Philadelphia that came first and, uh, of course, he, uh, still wrote and said, "You better come to America and, uh, if they have to go to work they go to work in the factory, instead of a farm, and that's how we happened to come here.

GUMB: Why, why did your father's sisters have to work? What was the reason for that?

CARILLI: Pardon?

GUMB: Why did your father's sisters have to work on the farm in Italy, or . . .

CARILLI: Well, because it was a big family and my father really, as I said, he was a fisherman and, oh, that trade doesn't bring very much, see. And he decided to come here in America.

GUMB: Okay. You mentioned that your father had some brothers in Philadelphia.

CARILLI: Yes, yes.

GUMB: Do you know why they come?

CARILLI: Well, they came for the same reason, because in that town there, as I said, there wasn't too much work, and they came for that

same reason because other people that came here before them, they used to write to them and said, "Well, they'll make a better living here." So they came here in America. That's why they came.

GUMB: Okay. Do you remember any kind of, uh, family meeting or, uh, how, you know, do you remember anything about how the decision was made, or whether you were involved as children, involved in the decision, or how it was explained to you, anything about that?

CARILLI: No. I don't know, uh, whether I can say anything on that.

GUMB: Okay. So, uh, do you remember what kind of procedures your father had to, were you involved at all in the procedures to come here, going to the consulate and getting passports, or anything like that?

CARILLI: No, I don't.

GUMB: Right. Just as a child, of course.

CARILLI: I was only nine years old and I can't, uh, I can't really remember all that.

GUMB: Right. Okay, okay. So, but, well, what do you remember about the vessel, about the boat coming over?

CARILLI: Oh, the boat coming over, I do remember quite a little because,

as I remember, we were the only children on the ship and, uh, remember the sailors? They were very, very nice to us, and they always used to bring us cookies and some Italian pastry that they used to bake, and used to take care of us very nicely. The only thing was when we, uh, we were supposed to get lost, we were down so we couldn't see anything, but we could look through the porthole and see the waves right against the ship. And, of course, the only thing I can tell you, everything was, everybody, rather, was praying and, uh, we didn't know where we were and, uh, the only time we knew it was over is when they let us go up on deck. Then, of course, we knew. But it took a whole month to come here, because we started from Naples the third of December and we landed here the New Year's Eve. Which, of course, New Year's Eve we had to stay inside. I remember my father coming over and we started waving at him, but he couldn't come in, so he had to wait until the second of January to come and take us out.

GUMB: Uh, who, who, what, uh, family members came along with you, who were you traveling with?

CARILLI: We were, we were six, uh, seven sisters, and my mother, and I'd say, this young fellow. We were nine of us that came with her.

GUMB: Your father was already here.

CARILLI: Oh, yes, my father was here in New York, yes.

GUMB: When, when did he come?

CARILLI: In New York?

GUMB: When did he come to New York, yeah?

CARILLI: Well, as I say, the, uh, when they landed here, they went to Philadelphia, but they were only there a year because my sisters happened to get a job in a, a cigarette, uh, factory, and cigars and, uh, my father noticed that one of them was coughing a little bit, so he made up his mind to go to New York instead of Philadelphia. So that's how we went to New York, see.

GUMB: Uh, why did he go, decide, what did he, they were coughing a little bit?

CARILLI: Well, because the tobacco, I suppose they were working on cigars and cigarettes, so I suppose that the smell, I couldn't tell you, you know.

GUMB: He didn't want to be around people coughing?

CARILLI: No, he didn't, no, because, uh, somebody told him that if they would stay there, I remember my father saying that, that they would get consumption. So therefore he said nothing doing. So since he could go to New York, he had friends, and since he could get a fishing boat there, then he started, that's how we went to

New York, see.

GUMB: Okay, right. Well, uh, how long did he leave your mother and the children?

CARILLI: Two years. 1902 to 1904.

GUMB: Okay. Do you remember how your mother supported the family?

CARILLI: Well, my mother didn't support, because my mother couldn't work. But, uh, my sisters, at that time, you know, fourteen and sixteen you could work and, uh, of course, they started working and they started working to the, uh, dressing shop, where they make dresses, because that was much better than the tobacco. And, uh, but my father, as I say, he was supporting on the fishing.

GUMB: So your father sent money back to Italy to your mother while he was here.

CARILLI: Oh, well I, perhaps he did, I don't know. But I know that he sent for us, you know, in two years.

GUMB: Okay. All right. Um, all right, well, going back to before we get onto the voyage on the vessel. Back in Italy, do you remember anyone talking about America who had been here?

CARILLI: Oh, yes, oh, yes, because people that were here, they used to

write and, in fact, uh, some of them used to write, over there, the, uh, like for instance over here you call a street, and over there you call it a road, understand, in Italian, so they used to write what they had here, and how good it was and, uh, they were making a very good living, as I said, and that's the only thing they used to write, you know. If they can, to come here, and they live much better than over there.

GUMB: Do you remember anybody coming back and hearing stories, uh, you know, people actually coming back rather than just letters, do you remember anyone coming back and . . .

CARILLI: No, I don't. No, I don't.

GUMB: How about in school? Do you remember learning anything about this country in school?

CARILLI: Oh, school over here, surely.

GUMB: Well, school in Italy, actually.

CARILLI: Oh, in Italy. Well, in Italy I didn't go too much in school, but my sisters did. All my sisters did. But I didn't because we were gonna come here. I knew that we were gonna come here in America, so, therefore, I wasn't too much of a student. I don't like school too much.

GUMB: Okay. Um, all right, well, back, uh, getting back to the vessel, um, uh, what do you, do you recollect anything about the, uh, accommodations on the boat?

CARILLI: The accommodations. We had, uh, bunks, down in steerage. I, because, as I say, I wouldn't know whether they had any state rooms or not at that time. But I know that we had, you know, down in steerage. But they had bunks.

GUMB: Was it one big area, or . . .

CARILLI: Oh, yes, yes, it was, yes. And, of course, there's, you know, we all had bunks, of course, but they were one on top of the other two, see. And the older one would go on the top, the younger one would go on the bottom.

GUMB: Uh, what kind of other people were in . . .

CARILLI: Well, mostly all Italians because it started from Naples, and they were mostly all Italians. And how many, I couldn't say.

GUMB: How did you feel? What . . .

CARILLI: Well, we felt thrilled, to tell you the truth, because we thought, well, we were coming here to America, and also we were coming here with the family. Because, uh, in Italy, all of the Italian families, I don't know about here in America, but I know

that in Italy they're very close to one another and, of course, it made us happy to come over to see my father and my other sisters, see.

GUMB: Do you remember anything about the food on the vessel?

CARILLI: The food? Well, the food was, uh, more Italian food, I know they had a lot, in the ship, you mean?

GUMB: Well, I know they had lots of macaroni. I know that. ( she laughs ) Because that's the most, that's the thing that they give you most. But, uh, it was Italian food and, uh, meat, as I say, macaroni, and in the morning you had a very nice breakfast. It's like, always, they're like the Italian breakfast that they always have, see.

GUMB: What's that like?

CARILLI: That, well, they give you some pastries at times and butter and then they give you some rolls, hard rolls and, of course, coffee. Yeah. That's what we had.

GUMB: Were you sick on board the vessel? Were you sick on the vessel?

CARILLI: No. None of us got sick, believe it or not. None of us got sick.

GUMB: Uh, as far as steerage, as you remember, was it, was it dirty, or

crowded?

CARILLI: No. No, no, no, no, it was clean. No. Was not dirty, no.

GUMB: How about, was it crowded? Did you remember that feeling?

CARILLI: Well, as I say, there were plenty of people, but I don't remember how many. But, uh, see, we were, my family was all together, you know, and, uh, and, of course, the rest would be a little further apart, or something like that. But it was a long, a long room and, uh, that's all I can say on that. That's the only thing I can remember on that.

GUMB: Well, you mentioned that the voyage took so long.

CARILLI: Yes.

GUMB: And, uh, it was because they got lost.

CARILLI: They got lost, yeah.

GUMB: Do you remember any kind of explanation, or . . .

CARILLI: No, I couldn't tell you because I imagine they had it in the papers over here, but, uh, the only thing, the only thing they said was that the captain . . .

GUMB: Go ahead.

CARILLI: The captain, their, uh, compass, or whatever they had, it, uh, must be . . . ( break in tape )

GUMB: So, Mrs. Carilli, we were talking about how the, okay, let's wait a second. Okay, so, uh, Mrs. Carilli, we were talking about, uh, the vessel, uh, getting lost and you were explaining, uh, why you think it got lost, or the reason it got lost.

CARILLI: Well, I did, I did say because, as I said, I heard that, uh, the captain, they lost the compass. And, uh, we, as I said, that's why we landed, uh, late. But that's the only thing I can remember, see. Because, as I say, I couldn't read the papers, and the papers had the story before we landed.

GUMB: Was there any explanation of how they could have lost the compass?

CARILLI: No, I don't, I couldn't tell you that because I don't remember.

GUMB: Okay. I'm curious, uh, what you were, what the family was taking, uh, with them, what they had, uh, with them. What kind of possessions you had.

CARILLI: You mean us?

GUMB: Right.

CARILLI: Our family?

GUMB: Yeah.

CARILLI: Coming over?

GUMB: Right. Do you have any recollection of what, what they brought?

CARILLI: No, I don't.

GUMB: Okay. Did you, when you left Italy, did you have the feeling you would never return to your native country?

CARILLI: Oh, no. No. That I knew because, uh, once we, we come here we wouldn't go back because we, uh, my mother sold everything and, uh, they had, uh, the flat all ready for us, and they had everything for us here, so I knew that, uh, we were gonna stay here all the while.

GUMB: Well, how did that feel? I mean, did you, uh, were there friends or relatives that you were leaving behind?

CARILLI: Well, they, when you leave a town . . .

GUMB: Okay, um, on the subject of leaving Italy, Mrs. Carilli, did you have any friends that you were leaving?

CARILLI: Yes We had the train to Naples, and that's where we started from.

GUMB: Actually, did you have any friends in Italy?

CARILLI: Friends? Oh, yes, of course. People that lived near us, and also my cousins, and that's about all.

GUMB: Well, how did it feel to be seeing them for the last time, I mean, what . . .

CARILLI: Well, you don't feel so good because you know you're gonna miss them. But that's one thing that can't be helped.

GUMB: Okay. You were speaking of the train to Naples. Can you tell us about how you got from, uh, the town to, uh . . .

CARILLI: Well, that's what I said. We came by train because, in fact, we, the train was going through our town. As I said before, it was like, uh, a port, then and, uh, they used to come, as I say, for oranges, and lemons and tangerines. We had all those there, see. And, uh, people from other towns, they used to bring chestnuts and, uh, we had a lot of lumber. See, that's why we had the train, in fact, we had the train station right in back of where, uh, in our town. In back where, uh, where I lived.

GUMB: Okay. Did you, um, did you have to wait long in Naples before getting on the ship?

CARILLI: No, we didn't. No, we didn't. We got right on board.

GUMB: Okay. Do you remember anything about any kind of checks or

examinations, or . . .

CARILLI: Yes, they did, oh, yes. They do examine you, yes, they do that.

GUMB: In Naples?

CARILLI: In Naples. And they did over here, too, when we landed here, too.

GUMB: Do you remember anything about what they were looking at, or . . .

CARILLI: Well, they're looking at your eyes, especially. And, uh, I think that he must have been a doctor because, you know, he was tapping on your back and making, trying to make you cough to see what you had or whatever. But, uh, that's about all.

GUMB: This was in Naples.

CARILLI: This was in Naples.

GUMB: On the ship?

CARILLI: No, no, in the station, while we were waiting for us, to go on board.

GUMB: Okay. Um, okay. Do you remember any other kind of questions, or passport checks?

CARILLI: No, I couldn't remember too much but, uh, I know that, uh, when

they examined us, as I said, for the eyes especially, that they just let you through, that's all.

GUMB: Okay. All right. Getting back onto the, on the voyage. Did you meet anybody on the voyage on the boat?

CARILLI: Well, we met, of course, but after we, uh, we landed, we all separated, and we haven't never seen them since.

GUMB: Do you remember anything about these people, what they . . .

CARILLI: No, I don't. No.

GUMB: Okay. Um, let's see. Did I ask about possessions, if you remember anything about what you brought, uh, were there any kind of personal things, you know, any kind of treasured items that you brought, uh, do you remember what you were wearing, you know, what kind of clothes?

CARILLI: Well, oh, on the wearing. Well, see, what, uh, as I say, my town is, uh, a warm place, like Florida, for instance, and we came here and we had just, uh, summer clothes. But my sisters had the winter clothes for us ready, see. And, uh, I remember wearing summer clothes because that's all we had.

GUMB: Okay. All right. Um, all right, do you remember anything about the, uh, your impressions when the boat first started to approach

land, do you remember anything about, uh, your first impressions of the country?

CARILLI: No.

GUMB: Do you remember anything about the, entering the harbor?

CARILLI: The harbor? No, I don't.

GUMB: Finally, do you remember seeing the Statue of Liberty?

CARILLI: Well, I, pardon?

GUMB: Do you remember seeing the Statue of Liberty?

CARILLI: Oh, yes. ( she laughs ) That's what, the first thing, the first thing we looked, because, uh, everybody was talking about it, and that's the first thing we looked, because the first thing they told us, the sailors to, uh, when we land in New York to, uh, look at the Statue of Liberty, and that's a sign of freedom. I remember that distinctly. So I said, well, that was, of course, they told us that in Italian. So, that's the first thing we done was when we landed, we looked at it, and we kind of thrilled because we were, as I would say, free.

GUMB: Uh, had you heard about it in Italy?

CARILLI: Yes, we did. Because when the people used to write, they used to

tell them about this Statue of Liberty. Of course, they didn't know what it mean, in Italian, or either they hadn't seen any picture or anything, so all we done is wait for the Statue of Liberty.

GUMB: What's it called in Italian?

CARILLI: Uh, well, now, like, how would you? I wouldn't know.

GUMB: You wouldn't know. Okay.

CARILLI: No, I wouldn't remember in Italian what they would call it. No, I don't.

GUMB: Okay.

CARILLI: I couldn't see without my glasses, my dear.

GUMB: That's fine. Okay, uh, so, do you have any recollection of, uh, where the boat docked when it came in?

CARILLI: Oh, yes. ( she laughs ) That's what, the first thing, the first thing we looked, because, uh, everybody was talking about it, and that's the first thing we looked, because the first thing they told us, the sailors, to, uh, when we land in New York, to, uh, look at the Statue of Liberty, and that's a sign of freedom. I remember that distinctly. So I said, well, that was, of course, they told us that in Italian. So, that's the first thing we done

was when we landed, we looked at it, and we kind of thrilled because we were, as I would say, free.

GUMB: Uh, had you heard about it in Italy?

CARILLI: Yes, we did. Because when the people used to write, they used to tell them about this Statue of Liberty. Of course, they didn't know what it meant, in Italian, or either they hadn't seen any picture or anything, so all we done is wait for the Statue of Liberty.

GUMB: What's it called in Italian?

CARILLI: Uh, well, now, like, how would you? I wouldn't know.

GUMB: You wouldn't know. Okay.

CARILLI: No, I wouldn't remember in Italian what they would call it. No. I don't.

GUMB: Okay.

CARILLI: I couldn't see without my glasses, my dear.

GUMB: That's fine. Okay, uh, so, do you have any recollection of, uh, where the boat docked when it came in?

CARILLI: Well, it landed on the Isle, see, but, uh, that's the only thing I do remember. The only thing, as I say, I remember my father

being there, but he couldn't come up, uh, on the ship. But, uh, because they weren't allowed. And, of course, the next day was New Year's and they weren't allowed to come then, it was holiday.

So we had to get out at the second of January.

GUMB: Right. Could you recognize your father?

CARILLI: Oh, surely. Well, he was only here for two years, I'm sure. Oh, sure.

GUMB: Okay.

CARILLI: And would I say he was a handsome man, tall, six feet, nice, handsome man. ( she laughs )

GUMB: Okay. Well, once you got into Ellis Island, do you remember the first thing that happened?

CARILLI: Well, the first thing that happened was when we got into the ferry and, uh, then when we landed at the Battery, or the first thing that, uh, we saw, was the elevated train, and when we got in there, oh, before that I remember my father buying ice cream because we didn't have ice cream there, we had slush in Italy. But, uh, remember he bought a quart of ice cream, and we got on the elevated train with that quart of ice cream and remember people looking at us. And I also remember my hands being swollen up because it was very, very cold. That I remember very

distinctly.

GUMB: Why were they looking at you?

CARILLI: Well, I suppose because they knew we had just come from g, and it was, they were curious, like you would, if you saw somebody strange or something funny, you would be curious, too.

GUMB: What was strange? How did they know you had just come from Italy?

CARILLI: Well, I suppose they knew because we started talking in Italian and also, the Battery there, and they knew darned well the, the, the ferry had just landed, so they knew we came from Italy.

GUMB: Did you have, uh, a particular kind of clothes on?

CARILLI: Oh, yes. As I say, when, uh, my father and my sisters came over to take us out, they had coats for us. The winter clothes, and the gloves, see. Because, as I say, it was January, it was pretty cold.

GUMB: Yeah. So the clothes you were wearing weren't particularly Italian-looking.

CARILLI: No, they weren't, they were made here in America, see. But, uh, as I say, they knew because you could tell when, uh, people come from Europe, if you look at them very, and then especially at that time, you know.

GUMB: You'd never had ice cream in Italy?

CARILLI: No, we had slush, they used to call it, but no ice cream. So my father thought he'd give us a treat by buying us the ice cream.

GUMB: Did that make you more cold, or . . .

CARILLI: No, I don't remember that, no. But we didn't have long to go b we got off at Canal Street and, uh, my father had a flat for us on Elizabeth Street, that's where we landed.

GUMB: Okay. All right. Well, getting back to Ellis Island, uh, do you remember anything about the medical examinations there?

CARILLI: Well, they did examine us and the, uh, the very same thing. And I don't remember, uh, what else they'd done because they didn't. They just examined, and they had, here, there they had a doctor and a nurse here. But, uh, they just looked at us and, uh, just, as I say, look in your ears and your teeth especially, and that's about all.

GUMB: Do you remember how long it took, the medical exam?

CARILLI: No, maybe about five minutes. Yeah.

GUMB: Okay. Um, okay, do you, uh, remember anything about the other procedures or, uh, any other questions that were asked, did you?

CARILLI: Well, if they did, they would have asked my mother, but they didn't ask the children, see. The only thing I remember is that, uh, for breakfast, they gave us oatmeal, which it was the first time we saw oatmeal, and the Danish pastries, I remember that, and coffee, see. And, of course, we didn't care for the oatmeal very much, but, uh, well, we thought we'd eat it, so we did. And since then I use oatmeal, believe it or not ( she laughs ) in the morning.

GUMB: This is the end of side one.

END OF SIDE ONE

BEGINNING OF SIDE TWO

GUMB: This is side two. Okay, Mrs. Carilli, we were talking about, uh, staying on Ellis Island, and you were there for two nights.

CARILLI: Two nights.

GUMB: Do you remember anything about where they put you to sleep?

CARILLI: Well, they had bunks, but I remember, maybe because we were too many people, or maybe because we came too late, but, uh, some of us had to be on the floor. We sat on the floor, and we stayed there until the next day to go to breakfast.

GUMB: Uh, do you remember what time you arrived there?

CARILLI: Well, no, I couldn't. I couldn't.

GUMB: Do you have any recollection of where the dormitory space was in relation to . . .

CARILLI: It was a big, uh, oh, would you say, a big hall? Yeah. It was a big, uh, big long room, like.

GUMB: Uh, so you, some people had to stay on the floor.

CARILLI: Yeah.

GUMB: Did you have to stay on the floor?

CARILLI: Well, I did for, yes, I did.

GUMB: Uh, did they give you anything, uh, any kind of . . .

CARILLI: Well, they probably did. That I couldn't tell you. But I know that the next day they had long tables for our breakfast.

GUMB: What, do you remember anything about what the other people looked like, what other kinds of people . . .

CARILLI: Well, no, well, I couldn't remember because, uh, we really, us children, we didn't, no, we didn't mingle in with, we stayed more with my mother and the fellow that came with us more than anything else because they always, well, each one took care of their own, like, understand? So some of them probably were

older, a lot of them were old, but, uh, we were the only, the youngsters.

GUMB: Uh, how did you feel at this time? Was there any kind of fear, or, uh . . .

CARILLI: Well, I don't know what I would say on the feeling because, as I said, we felt thrilled that we were here in America, and, uh, we were anxious to get out, I'm sure of that. But that's about all I can tell you.

GUMB: And, uh, just to say again, and just to make clear, the reason you were staying there was, was what, again? The reason you had to stay two nights?

CARILLI: Well, because we came Christmas Eve, I mean, New Year's Eve and, uh, New Year's Eve, then it's the New Year's Day, and it's a holiday. So we had to stay until the second of, uh, January.

GUMB: Right.

CARILLI: That was it.

GUMB: That was the reason. Okay. Um, all right, uh, well, you said there was that whole day, New Year's Day. Was there any kind of celebration, or . . .

CARILLI: No, no. We didn't even know it was a holiday. So, no, there was

no celebration at all. If there was, I don't remember it. But if there was, I would remember. I think that the whole thing was closed altogether.

GUMB: Okay. Um, do you remember what kind of, what, if there were interpreters, or how this, how it was communicated to you that this was a holiday?

CARILLI: Well, there were Italian people there that, uh, would talk. They had Italian people there working. They had Italian people working.

GUMB: Right. Okay. And they could communicate with your mother.

CARILLI: Right. My mother. Yes.

GUMB: Okay. For that day that you were there, New Year's Day, do you remember anything about what you did, how you occupied your time?

CARILLI: Well, I suppose we, uh, we, I suppose we played and, uh, I couldn't say what we done because I don't remember that.

GUMB: Do you remember if you were allowed out of that room? I mean, did you have to stay in the room?

CARILLI: Yes, we were allowed out, but in the Island. No, we were allowed out in the Island. Yeah. It was a big place.

GUMB: Were there guards? Do you have any recollection of it?

CARILLI: No, I, I, no, I don't think so. No.

GUMB: So, uh, where did you finally see your father? Where did you finally see him for the first time?

CARILLI: Well, the first time we saw him the New Year's Eve, but he couldn't come up. As I said, he couldn't come up the ship, see. And we went to him, I remember that. But then we saw him the second of January, when he came to take us out.

GUMB: Okay. So, he was on the dock?

CARILLI: Yes.

GUMB: And you waved from him, to him, from the dock.

CARILLI: We all waved, yes.

GUMB: All right. And do you remember where on, on Ellis, you met him, you saw him on Ellis Island?

CARILLI: Yes.

GUMB: On the second of January.

CARILLI: Yes.

GUMB: Okay. Do you remember where that was, where? Do you have any idea?

CARILLI: Well, the first time we saw him, as i say, when he came to take us out, you know. I mean, the second time we saw him. Because the first time was for New Year's Eve, when he came to take us out.

GUMB: So he was allowed to come to the Island, and meet you.

CARILLI: Yeah, he was. Yeah, but couldn't come up the ship.

GUMB: Right. Okay. All right. Um, okay. So you had an, also an evening meal on Ellis Island on New Year's day.

CARILLI: Well, on the evening meal, that's another thing that I don't remember. The reason I remember the breakfast, as I say, is because we had the oatmeal. That's one thing we didn't have in Italy. But for the, uh, for the dinner, I don't remember.

GUMB: Okay. You don't remember any, any unusual food?

CARILLI: No, I don't. No.

GUMB: So, um, all right, you've described getting on the elevated train.

CARILLI: Right.

GUMB: And, um, uh . . .

CARILLI: Having the ice cream cone in our hands. And getting off on Canal

Street, and two blocks away was Elizabeth Street, and there was our flat right there.

GUMB: Well, how did, how did living in an apartment compare to the old, to Italy?

CARILLI: Well, now, as I say, where we were in g, my house was a, they were beautiful homes. But when we came here, the flat, it wasn't as good, but it was a flat, and they had the bathroom in the hallway, and I remember we had, uh, one bulb for the electric, in each room. We had a kitchen, naturally, and other, five other rooms. And that was Elizabeth Street. And I remember going up four flights of stairs all the time. And if you want to know, on the school that we went, I was put in the second grade, and we had to learn, and learn we did. Otherwise, we wouldn't be here, I guess. ( she laughs )

GUMB: Did you learn any English before?

CARILLI: Pardon?

GUMB: Did you have any exposure to English before coming here?

CARILLI: No, we didn't. No.

GUMB: So was there any kind of training for you in the second grade, you know, English training?

CARILLI: Well, the regular, the regular schooling, and, uh, they taught us how to read the clock, and they also taught us how to sing. And, uh, well, that's about all except, uh, our schoolwork.

GUMB: Out of curiosity, do you remember if your first teacher spoke Italian so that they could . . .

CARILLI: No, no, no, no, no. As I say, everything was English. And I remember the, the other children laughing because we tried to speak exactly like the teacher but, uh, you know how it is when you just go in a classroom. So I know that they did laugh, the children, that I remember. Because if I'm not mistaken, I think I did cry a little bit. And then when we went home we told my mother. But one thing, she and my father insist we had to go to school. It wasn't like Italy that I didn't like school, but over here I had to go, so I did. And I suppose I'm not sorry for it but, uh . . . ( she laughs )

GUMB: Do you remember other things that were difficult to get used to, other problems of adjusting?

CARILLI: No, I don't. I don't, because, uh, everything was there, so we didn't have no, uh, no hard time of going over other places, because schools were there, stores were there and, uh, everything we needed was there. So we really didn't have to go any other way.

GUMB: Okay. How long did it take you to learn English?

CARILLI: ( she laughs ) How long, I wouldn't know. Maybe the, uh, one year? Well, one year, I suppose, I should have learned a little bit, or maybe two, I couldn't remember that.

GUMB: In the area where you settled, around Elizabeth Street, were there a lot of Italians?

CARILLI: All Italians. Mostly all Italians.

GUMB: So you could communicate with the neighbors?

CARILLI: Oh, yes. Yes, yes.

GUMB: Uh, okay. Um, all right. I'm curious in that, what you expected of America, when you were in Italy, how did those expectations compare to what you found?

CARILLI: Well, we didn't expect much because, as I say, people that were here, they used to write letters. The only thing that, uh, I thought it was funny is because people that came here, saw the elevated train and, uh, one man wrote that, uh, he said, well, he says, when you come here you see the train up in the air, you know, in Italian it's kind of funny. So when we came over and saw the elevated train, we were looking for the train up in the air, see. But it was an elevated train.

GUMB: All right. Um, how long did it take you to feel like an American?

CARILLI: Oh, not very long, to tell you the truth. Not very long, because we, uh, we mingled in with the other people that were here in America before we were and, uh, it didn't really take us long, see, to get acquainted with it. Especially when you go to school, it really doesn't take long.

GUMB: Did you have to, what did you have to do to become a citizen?

CARILLI: Well, I became a citizen, uh, 1928, in New York.

GUMB: Well, what did you have to do to become a citizen?

CARILLI: Oh, nothing. Just, uh, just answer questions, of course. And, uh, then pledge allegiance to your flag, and raise your hand, and you had to have two witnesses. At that time, I don't know whether they had, now they have, uh, a bunch together, but at that time it was one at a time. And I had, uh, my sister and, uh, somebody else, as a witness.

GUMB: Were there any customs or, uh, practices that you, you brought from, uh, from Italy, and your family continued to, uh, to . . .

CARILLI: Practice?

GUMB: To practice, yeah.

CARILLI: The only thing there was was swimming.

GUMB: Swimming?

CARILLI: Swimming and running. And I was a pretty good little runner, a good runner. Because when we lived here in Boston down the North End, Fourth of July they used to have swimming races, and they also, the 19th of april they used to have the running races. So me, as a tomboy, I went for swimming and I even won the Charles River swimming. And running. Which, that time, they gave you five dollar gold pieces, they didn't give you, like now, medals or something like that. So we used to spend the gold pieces and here I am without a medal, without nothing, just spending the gold pieces.

GUMB: Did you do the same kind of thing in Italy?

CARILLI: Yes, I was, as I say, we was going swimming because we lived right, uh, across the ocean.

GUMB: You, you spoke about the Italian language.

CARILLI: Italian language, we had to speak Italian in the home because, as I said, my mother and father insisted we had to learn the language, and especially after we went to school and we started talking English with the other sisters, well, my father and mother stopped us. We should speak Italian at home, and speak

the English language outside. So that was the rule, so we had to obey.

GUMB: Uh, okay. Did you ever have any desire to go back to Italy?

CARILLI: No, no. We never did. We did on a vacation, a trip, just to see the town, and they were building all kinds of buildings then which now, as I said, it became a summer resort, a real summer resort, not the way it was when I was there.

GUMB: Do you have any idea what would have happened to you if you had stayed?

IF you had stayed in Italy what would have happened?

CARILLI: What would happen? I would have to go to work in the farm like my sisters had to, for awhile. And then, of course, get married, the same as I did here. That's all. There wasn't any factories or any kind of industry except fishing and, of course, as I say, now they've built a summer resort, which they have plenty of hotels and plenty of homes. But that time, there was nothing.

GUMB: This is the end of side two, the interview with Mrs. Sadie Carilli.